Please cancel Claims 1-8 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Please add new Claims 9-12 as follows:

1 - 8 (Cancelled)

9. (New) An image input/output control method for a device that performs a compressed image storage step of compressing an input image using variable length compression to store the compressed input image in a memory in the case of a non-black-and-white copy mode, and an output step of outputting the compressed input image stored in the compressed image storage step, the method comprising:

an uncompressed image storage step of storing an input image in the memory without compressing the input image in the case of the a-black-and-white copy mode; and

a control step of performing control so as to start the output of the stored image while the image is being stored in the memory in the uncompressed image storage step.

10. (New) The image input/output control method according to claim 9, wherein whether to perform either the compressed image storage step or uncompressed image storage step is determined in accordance with a setting concerning a copy job including the black-and-white copy mode.

11. (New) An image input/output control apparatus having compressed image storage means for compressing an input image using variable length compression to store the compressed input image in a memory in the case of a non-black-and-white copy mode, and output means for outputting the compressed input image stored by said compressed image storage means, said apparatus comprising:

uncompressed image storage means for storing an input image in the memory without compressing the input image in the case of a black-and-white copy mode; and

control means for performing control so as to start the output of the stored image while the image is being stored in the memory by said uncompressed image storage means.

12. (New) The image input/output control apparatus according to claim 11, wherein whether to use either said compressed image storage means or uncompressed image storage means is determined in accordance with a setting concerning a copy job including the black-and-white copy mode.